A

CURE FOR THE SPLEEN.

OR

AMUSEMENT

FOR

A WINTER's EVENING;

Being the Substance of a Conversation on the Times, over

A FRIENDLY TANKARD AND PIPE.

BETWEEN

SHARP, — — — A Country Parson.
BUMPER, — — — A Country Justice.
FILLPOT, — — An Inn-keeper.
GRAVEAIRS, — — A Deacon.
TRIM, — — — A Barber.
BRIM, — — — A Quaker.
PUFF, — — — A late Representative.

Taken in short Hand, by

SIR ROGER DE COVERLY.

Omne tulit Punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.
HOR.

AMERICA:

Printed and sold in the Year MDCCLXXV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A CURE FOR THE SPLEEN, &c.

Enter Sharp *and* Bumper.

Sharp.

YOUR ſervant ſquire *Bumper*, pray walk in; how do you do?

Bump. In pretty good health, I thank you ſir; how is it with yourſelf and madam?

Sharp. We're moving about, tollerably well, for old folks; pray ſit down.

Bump. Thank you ſir, [*ſits down.*] very fine weather for the ſeaſon.

Sharp. Yes, we have had a very favorable winter hitherto; and have great cauſe for thankfulneſs.

Bump. Aye, as you ſay ſir, we ought to be thankful for a little, and that's the way to get more, as the ſaying is—he! he! he! Excuſe my joking a little, you know it is my way, ſir—hem!

Sharp. Oh, I love a joke; but, we may enjoy many favors of a kind providence, and we ought not to be ungrateful

ſquire;

ſquire; we have a very plentiful year for every thing except cyder; that, indeed, has fallen ſhort.

Bump. Why aye, as you ſay ſir, we have but precious little cyder this year—this puts me in mind of your tankard—he! he! he! Excuſe my boldneſs, but I am ſomewhat thirſty; and a drop of your old pomona to moiſten the clay, as the ſaying is; and then a pipe of *Mc. Intire*'s beſt; and then we'll ſettle the nation, ha! ha! ha!

Sharp. With all my heart.——Tony; a tankard of cyder, and pipes and tobacco here, quick; and take the ſquire's hat and cane.

Enter to them Fillpot, Gravairs *and* Trim.

Sharp. Your ſervant gentlemen, pray ſit down; how do you do deacon?

Grave. I thank you revd. ſir, this cough has not quite left me yet,—h—hugh—h—hugh—h—hugh—tho' thro' mercy, it is much better,—h—hugh—h—hugh.

Sharp. I'm glad to hear it. How do you do landlord?

Fill. As well as I can theſe hard times ſir.

Sharp. Hard times! Why ſurely you've no reaſon to complain landlord.

Fill. Why no ſir, I don't complain; that is, on my own account—but then our public affairs, you know ſir, we muſt think a little about them.

Sharp. I believe if we mind every one his own buſineſs, and leave the affairs of the ſtate to the conduct of wiſer heads, we ſhall ſoon be convinced that we are a happy people.

Trim. Excuſe me there revd ſir, ſaving your preſence; why ſir, if I was deny'd the priviſege of my ſhop to canvaſs politicks, as a body may ſay, that is *Lord North*, Eaſt-India company, conſtitution, charter rights and priviſeges, duties, taxes and the like of that, body o'me ſir, ſtrip me of this darling privilege, and you may e'en take my razors, ſoap, combs and all, and ſet fire to my ſhop.—Why ſir, I remember the time when every man minded his own buſineſs, as *you* ſay, and then my cuſtomers were in ſuch a confounded hurry, that if they could not be ſhav'd in a twinkling, without loſs of time, they'd go to meeting with their beards hanging down to the waiſtbands of their breeches, and I muſt loſe their cuſtom; but now ſir, if forty come in together, and all in the moſt freezing hurry; I have nothing to do but to ſouſe plump into a deſcant upon the times, and in the ſnap of a finger every man is as patient and ſtill as any blockhead in my ſhop—

correcting

arrectis auribus, they ſit gaping, with ſolemn unmeaning phiz's —every one liſtens with ſilent attention to me, and forgets his beard, until I am pleaſed to diſſolve the charm by cloſing my diſcourſe: I tell them how I would *trim Lord North*, and have the lords and commons (excepting the diſſentients) the Eaſt-India company, Gov. *Bernard*, Gov. *Hutchinſon*, &c. over head and ears in the *ſuds*, if I could get at them; and then I rattle away upon grievances, oppoſition, rebellion and ſo on, only for the innocent purpoſe of ſupporting the credit of my ſhop. Pray ſir, if you have any compaſſion for poor *Trim*, for heaven's ſake don't preach up that old faſhioned doctrine of every one's minding his own buſineſs; for if you do, I muſt decamp, and ſeek a living in ſome town where I can find a more orthodox miniſter. Would you pleaſe to be ſhaved ſir?

Sharp. Why really neighbour *Trim* you prove the truth of your doctrine, by making me an example of the force of your eloquence; amazed at your harrangue, I had entirely forgot your buſineſs as to ſhave me:—come ſit down.

Sharp. Non tanto me dignor honore, domine; I know my place too well to ſit down before yourſelf, and his worſhip here.

Bump. Come, come, ſit down Mr. *Trim*; and pray no more of your lingo, 'till Mr. *Sharp* recollects the cyder, becauſe it will grow flat by ſtanding, he! he! he! Excuſe me revd ſir,

Sharp. I beg your pardon ſquire—my ſervice to you. [*drinks*]

Bump. Deacon my ſervice to you—[*drinks.*]—Choice cyder upon my honor—but I am afraid it won't come round again—mum!

Sharp. Never fear ſquire, we'll repleniſh the tankard when it's out—there's plenty in the cellar—pray drink deacon.

Grave. Revd ſir, here's towards your good health [*drinks.*] mighty fine cyder truly.

Enter to them Brim *and* Puff.

Sharp. How do you do friend *Brim?*

Brim. I thank thee friend *Sharp*, in pretty good health; how is it with thee and thy family?

Sharp. Pretty well I thank you. Your ſervant Mr. *Puff*: Pray be ſeated gentlemen. Come, we are all ſmokers, I think, except Mr. *Trim*, and it is what the ſeamen call a leward evening; let us enjoy a ſocial pipe; and I ſuppoſe neighbor *Trim*, you will have patience to tarry an hour, if you can be indulg'd with a diſh of politicks.

Trim.

Trim. O, by all means ſir, I'm in no hurry—but as for politicks I can do well enough without them here, provided always that you don't baniſh them from my ſhop; for there they are a part of my trade; at leaſt, they are the *Cauſa ſine qua non* of my cuſtom; and a trade in *theory* without the *practical* part, will go but little way towards keeping the pot boiling.

Brim. Verily, friend *Trim*, thou art arch to day—why I have often heard thee holding forth to thy cuſtomers, with ſuch energy and apparent *zeal*, againſt Britiſh tyranny and oppreſſion, that I was verily perſuaded thou waſt infected with the epidemical frenzy of the times; but now I find thou waſt only cunningly working at thy trade forſooth—truly thou art a very wag.

Trim. Aye friend *Brim*, all trades have their myſteries, and one half the world live by the follies of the other half.

Puff. But pray Mr. *Trim*, are you ſuch a *tory* as to turn all our grievances into ſcorn and deriſion, and only pretend to be a friend to your country, for the ſake of a living?

Trim. Why, between you and I and the poſt, Mr. *Puff*, I believe, *nay*, when you would be a *repreſentative*, and *Trim* the barber, when he would get and keep good cuſtom, act upon much the ſame principles with ninety nine in a hundred of the moſt flaming, patriotic ſons of liberty. Intereſt is the word! But I claim the *excluſive* right of preaching *myſelf*, only in *my own ſhop*; every where elſe, I had much rather be a hearer of my good miniſter Mr. *Sharp*—therefore you muſt excuſe me from entering the liſts here, unleſs it be now and then a word or ſo, by way of marginal note: And upon the word of an honeſt ſhaver, or trimmer, or, call me what you pleaſe, I'd ſhave or trim you all round for nothing, if I could but hear you ſettle intelligibly, what is a whig, and what a tory—what is conſtitution, and what are charter rights and privileges—what is the obedience due from an American Engliſhman, to the king and parliament of Great-Britain, and what are our grievances; for by the mother that bore me, and by the father (if I ever had one) who begot me, I do ſolemnly affirm, friend *Brim*, that notwithſtanding all I have *heard*, and the ſtill greater, *all*, I have *preached* upon this ſubject, I am ignorant of the eſſential difference (if there is any) between a *true whig* and an *honeſt tory*. I know nothing in our conſtitution by which we can claim any privileges which are deny'd us. I have never heard of any obedience, demand-

ed

ed by the king and parliament, which I can in conſcience withhold; and I have no more idea of the grievances which for the ſake of my cuſtom, I am oblig'd to join in complaining of, than I have of the political diſputes in the moon; though I believe they are pretty much alike, becauſe our's, I can ſafely ſwear, ſavor ſtrong of *lunacy*.

Brim. Friend *Trim*, in good truth, thou ſpeakeſt like an oracle—I would thou and I could hear theſe matters diſcuſs'd.

Fill. I ſay, amen—for I hear them talk'd about and about every day, and many a good mug of ſlip do I ſell upon the ſame account, and that's all I get by it; for, burn my bar-room, if I underſtand a word of the pudden.

Bump. I don't know where Mr. *Trim* got his learning: but, in his majeſty's name, I do ſolemnly declare, that in my judgment, no mere man, ſince the days of *Coke* upon *Littleton*, could in ſo few words have expreſs'd more upon the ſubject than he has done; and I heartily ſecond his motion—provided always, that we firſt light our pipes, after having previouſly put about the tankard—Once before you fill, and twice before you light, ſays the proverb—You know revd ſir—he! he! he! hem! excuſe me—ſir my ſervice to you.

Puff. Hem! he! hem! I cannot for the life of me comprehend how it is poſſible for a man of Mr. *Trim*'s good natural ſenſe, to be ſo egregiouſly miſtaken in his notions of our conſtitutional rights and privileges, as he ſeems to be; why, Mr. ſpeaker!—I beg pardon—gentlemen, I mean—but, no matter—let that ſlip—I aſk pardon gentlemen—but as I was ſaying—for him to ſay as this here—to wit—that there is no difference between a *whig* and a *tory*—why what a dickens are we contending about, if ſo be as how this here was the caſe—a fine caſe truly—why has not Lord *North* and Lord *Hilſboro'* and that *George Greenville* ſtript us of all our conſtitutional charter rights and privileges—the birth-right of Engliſhmen, which our pious fore-fathers purchaſed with their blood and treaſure, when they came over into this waſte howling wilderneſs—and has not lord *Chatham*, and Mr. *Pitt*, and lord *Camden*, and—and—and—lord what d'ye call 'em—it's immaterial about their names—I ſay pleaſe your honors—gentlemen, I mean—'aſk pardon; have not theſe great and good men ſtood up for our rights and privileges, againſt the tyrannical deſigns of the corrupt miniſtry and houſe of commons—and now, for to tell me that there is no difference between a *whig* and a *tory*—and for a man to ſay as how our

conſtitution

conſtitution isn't taken away—and that we've no grievances, and the like of that—I ſay, in my humble opinion, he is an *enemy to his country*—juſt as if every man did not know what conſtitution is—and whether we had any grievances, and ſo forth; why Mr. *Trim* may talk his latin ſtuff if he pleaſes, with his *Cauſis ſine quono*, and ſuch like—I know ſome latin as well as he; and I ſay he's an *ignoramis*, if ſo be he talks at this rate—I hope in mercy we ſhall have no bloodſhed; but I ſwagger, (I aſk pardon for ſwearing) but I ſhore, before I'd give up our juſt rights and privileges, I'd take my gun, and load and fire and pull trigger like the nation and fight up to the knees in blood—but I wont put myſelf in a paſſion—I aſk pardon gentlemen—By your leave ſir, I'll make bold to take a drink of your cyder. Gentlemen all your healths.

Trim. I believe Mr. *Puff* it is with you pretty much as it is with your humble ſervant, you can preach beſt in *your own ſhop*; but as *your ſhop* as well as *mine* happens to be *ſhut up*, at this preſent writing, I fancy we both ſhould ſave credit, by leaving it to others to diſcuſs theſe knotty points; for I have frankly confeſs'd my ignorance; and if you follow my example, it will poſitively be your ſhorteſt way out of the labyrinth in which you ſeem to be bewildered—*ſat verbum ſapienti.*

Puff. None of your unmanly reflections Mr. *Trim.* I ſuppoſe you think I don't underſtand *greek*.

Brim. Friend *Trim*, I like thee and thy diſcourſe, well—thy motion is good, and thy humour pleaſeth my mind; and I do verily believe a calm debate upon theſe matters, interlarded with thy pithy marginal notes, would tend greatly to our edification.

Trim. I believe ſo too; and, by my aunt *Tabitha*'s muff, I proteſt good Mr. *Puff*, that I had no deſign to offend you in any thing I have ſaid; and if I have offended, I aſk pardon, and that's the ſatisfaction of a gentleman; and now I hope we ſhall verify the old proverb, *Amantium ira amoris redintegratio eſt.*

Puff. Well, well, no more of your French jabbering—I'm not a man to hold anger, tho' I ſay it—but howſomever, I ſay again, rather than tamely give up my rights and privileges, I would fight to the laſt drop of——

Trim. Cyder.

Bump. Ha! ha! ha! well put in *Trim*—here's your good health Mr. *Puff*.

Grave. Upon my word gentlemen, theſe are no laughing matters—

matters—h—hugh—as Mr.—h—hugh—*Puff* has very well obſerved, all our charter rights and privileges are torn from us and we are made ſlaves, and the Lord ſend us deliverance —h—hugh—h—hugh—h—hugh.

Sharp. Don't you carry matters rather too far deacon? You certainly view our public affairs through a gloomy deceitful medium; you ſay *all* our charter rights and privileges are torn from us—and that we are *ſlaves*. Pray conſider, don't you ſit quietly under your own vine and under your own fig-tree? Don't you enjoy full liberty of conſcience in religious matters? Don't you reap without interruption, the fruit of your own labours? Does any one meddle with your perſon or property? Are you overburthened with taxes? Compare your ſituation with that of any other people under heaven: Turn your eyes to your brother Engliſhmen in Great-Britain—ſee with what taxes and duties they are burthened—and you will find you enjoy liberty, freedom and eaſe in a degree ſo far ſuperior to them, that if you have the leaſt ſpark of gratitude in your boſom, you will be ſo far from murmering and complaining, like the grumbling, rebellious Jews of old, that you will exclaim, with the moſt grateful effuſion of ſoul, "The lines are fallen to us in pleaſant places, yea, we have a goodly heritage."

Trim. Or with the poet,

O fortunatos, nimium, ſua ſi bona norint,
Americanos!

That is to ſay, Mr. *Puff, How happy are Americans, if they did but know it!*

Sharp. The truth is, and it is a melancholly truth, we have been lifted up to heaven in privileges, and now like the choſen people of old, we ſpurn at the hand that raiſed and has hitherto ſuſtained us: Our king has planted us in a land flowing with milk and honey, and has driven out the Canaanites from before us, and left us no thorn in our ſide—and now we vauntingly and ungratefully ſay, who ſhall be Lord over us? The deſcription given of the Jews by Mr. *Dryden*, fits us, ſo very nearly, that I cannot help repeating it—

"The Jews, a head-ſtrong, moody, murm'ring race,
As ever try'd th' extent and ſtretch of grace;
God's pamper'd people, whom, debauch'd with eaſe,
No *king* could *govern*, and, no *God* could *pleaſe*;
(Gods they had try'd of *every* ſhape and ſize,
That god ſmiths could produce, or prieſts deviſe:

 Theſe

Theſe *Adam*-wits, too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted *liberty*;
And when no rule, no precedent was found,
Of men, by laws, leſs circumſcrib'd and bound;
They led their wild deſires to woods and caves,
And thought that all but, Savages, were ſlaves.
Thoſe very Jews, who at their very beſt,
Their honour, more than loyalty, expreſt;
Now, wonder'd why, ſo long, they had obey'd,
An idol monarch which their hands had made;
Thought they might ruin him they could create,
Or melt him to that golden calf, a ſtate.
But theſe were random bolts"———

Puff. But pray revd ſir, have the parliament any right to make laws for us? And isn't this a grievance?

Fill. Aye, there was a Boſton miniſter, and another gentleman, lodged at our houſe laſt night, and they talk'd a great deal about this very thing, and made it out as clear as the ſun at noon-day, that the parliament have no ſuch right; tho' I did not underſtand them—but I know they argued very powerfully, and proved that we ought to reſiſt. However, I don't like taking up arms neither, that I muſt own.

Trim. No, no; let you alone for that; if we come to gun-powder and cold iron, I'll be ſhot, if you a'n't found intrench'd in your bar, behind a tier of caſe-bottles, loaded with good cherry ſtings.

Brim: Prithee friend *Trim* reſtrain thy wit a little—I would gladly hear friend *Sharp* diſcourſe upon this authority of parliament; I plainly perceive that the minds of friend *Graveairs*, and friend *Puff*, and friend *Fillpot* ſtand in need of enlightning—and friend *Sharp* ſeems to be moved to become a light to their feet and a lamp to their paths.

Trim. *Tace*, is the Latin for a candle—I am dumb. *Perge Domine reverende.*

Sharp. I have no objection againſt delivering my opinion freely upon this queſtion, I can appeal to you all as my vouchers, that I have never cloak'd my ſentiments, or conform'd outwardly to popular prejudices, as too many of my reverend brethren have done; and I wiſh I could not add with truth, that too many of them, inſtead of inculcating the peaceable principles of the goſpel, have by their prayers, ſermons and examples encouraged ſedition, privy conſpiracy and rebellion, and ſtimulated their hearers to every evil work—witneſs the late

late impious faſt—an unparallel'd piece of ſolemn mockery, ſhocking to every ſerious mind—for what can be conceiv'd more horrible, than to beſeech the fountain of truth and juſtice to eſpouſe and abet the cauſe of robbery and injuſtice, by imploring of him a miraculous interpoſition for the removal of grievances, brought upon the metropolis by a moſt high-handed robbery, plunder and deſtruction of their neighbour's property, and continued only by an obſtinate refuſal to make that reſtitution which the laws of juſtice, equity and good conſcience loudly demand? Sorry I am that ſuch a heaven daring farce ſhould originate with miniſters—I am grieved that ſo many of our ſacred order ſhould, by this and other parts of their conduct, have diſcovered ſuch a diſpoſition to increaſe inſtead of curing our popular diſtractions.

Trim. Nothing new ſir, I remember to have read of prieſts in days of yore, that they were,

——————" Well vers'd of old,
In godly faction, and in treaſon bold,
For who ſo fit for reign as Aaron's race,
If once dominion they could found in grace?
Theſe lead the path, tho' not of ſureſt ſcent,
Yet deepeſt mouth'd againſt the government."

And *Lilly*'s grammar ranks them with beaſts and robbers,—"*Bos, fur, ſus, atque ſacerdos.*"——No offence to you ſir.

Sharp. Hold, hold, neighbour *Trim*, you are not to take liberties with my cloth, becauſe I do myſelf. But to proceed—In conſidering this queſtion of the right of parliament to make laws to bind us, I ſhall obſerve the diſtinction made by Mr. *Pitt*, Mr. *Dickinſon*, Mr. *Wilkes*, Mr. *Otis*, and all other advocates for the rights of the Colonies, between *legiſlation* and *taxation*—they ſay there muſt neceſſarily be a ſupreme power, lodg'd ſomewhere, of governing and regulating the trade of the Colonies; and this is in the King, Lords and Commons of Great-Britain, but that this does not extend to *internal taxes*, tho' it includes the right of laying *duties* on ſuch articles of trade, as they allow us to import, if we chooſe to import them—and upon this diſtinction was founded our oppoſition to the unhappy ſtamp-act—we then acknowledged the authority of parliament, in it's full extent, excepting only in the matter of *internal taxation*; tho' it is very true, we have ſince been daily growing wiſer and wiſer, 'till at length, we openly avow principles of *abſolute independency*, and deny that the parliament of Great-Britain have any more

rightful authority over us, than the parliament of *Paris*, or the divan of *Conſtantinople*. And the grand argument in ſupport of this new doctrine is, that our *charter* is a *compact* between the king and our anceſtors, by which the *ſole* power of legiſlation is given forever to our general aſſembly. And in anſwer to this it is ſaid, that it never was in the *power* of the king to put any Britiſh ſubjects out of the juriſdiction of parliament, and therefore, if he had given ſuch a charter, it would be void; but it is ſaid further, that it is not true in fact; for that no ſuch grant of a ſupreme, independant, uncontrolable power of legiſlation is, or ever was contained in the charter. Now, if ſuch a power he convey'd by the charter, it is either *expreſſed* or *implied*—that it is not *expreſſed* is too clear to be deny'd—and therefore it muſt be *implied*, or it is not convey'd by the charter, but is merely imaginary. This is a queſtion of the higheſt importance to every man who has got a head, or any property to ſave or to loſe; for the principle, if wrong, leads directly to *treaſon* and *rebellion*; to which we are haſtening with a rapidity which, I greatly fear, will ſoon plunge us headlong in irretrievable ruin, unleſs we are ſtopt in our career. In order to a right underſtanding of this important matter, it is neceſſary to go back and conſider how the caſe ſtood before, at, and everſince the time of our receiving the charter:—And from this view we ſhall alſo perceive whether the preſent claim of parliament is new, as many ignorantly ſuppoſe, or whether it was made, openly and expreſly, before the grant of the charter, and has ever ſince been uniformly exerciſed by them, and acknowledged by us. To ſatisfy myſelf in this matter, I have made a journey to Boſton, on purpoſe to ſee the ſtatutes at large; and I find the caſe to be thus. In 1650, an act of parliament was made for blocking up the ports of *Barbados*, *Virginia*, *Bermudas* and *Antigua*, in which the ſupreme authority of parliament over all the Colonies is moſt clearly and expreſly claimed, and it is declared "that they are, and ought to be, ſubordinate to, and dependant upon England; and have, ever ſince the planting thereof, been, and ought to be ſubject to ſuch laws, orders and regulations, as are, or ſhall be made by the parliament of England.—*Any letters patent, or other authority formerly granted or given, to the contrary notwithſtanding.*" This was during the protectorſhip of *Oliver Cromwell*.

Trim. That ſame *Oliver Cromwell* was a huge ſon of liberty, as I take it.

Brim

Brim. Yea verily, ſo huge that he never left, 'till he had got the whole liberty of the nation into his own hands; and bequeathed it all to Charles the ſecond, as a recompence for taking off the head of his father, only for deſiring his ſhare of it: But Charles the ſon being a very different man from Oliver, return'd the nation their liberty.

Sharp. In 1663, under the reign of King *Charles* the ſecond, was paſſed *An act for the encouragement of trade*—in which is this very remarkable clauſe—"And in regard his majeſty's plantations beyond the ſeas are inhabited and peopled by his *ſubjects* of this *kingdom of England*; for the maintaining a greater correſpondence and kindneſs between them, and keeping them in a *firmer dependance* upon it, and rendering them yet more beneficial and advantageous unto it, in the further employment and increaſe of Engliſh ſhipping and ſeamen, vent of Engliſh woollen and other manufactures and commodities, rendering the navigation to and from the ſame, more ſafe and cheap, and making this kingdom a ſtaple, not only of the commodities of thoſe plantations, but alſo of the commodities of other countries and places, for the ſupplying of them; and it being the uſage of other nations to keep their plantation-trade to themſelves:" &c. Our charter was granted by King *William* and Queen *Mary*, in 1692, which impowers the general-court to make laws "ſo as the ſame be not repugnant or contrary to the laws of the realm of England." And in 1696, during the ſame glorious reign, an act of parliament was made extending all the acts of trade to the Colonies, and requiring all governors and commanders in chief, "to take a ſolemn oath to do their utmoſt, that all the clauſes, matters and things contained in that and former acts of parliament, relating to the colonies and plantations be punctually and *bonâ fide* obſerved." And it is therein expreſly enacted, "That all laws, by-laws, uſages and cuſtoms, at this time, or which hereafter ſhall be in practice, or endeavored or pretended to be in force or practice, in any of the ſaid plantations, which are in any wiſe repugnant to the beforementioned laws or any of them, ſo far as they do relate to the ſaid plantations, or any of them, or which are any ways repugnant to this preſent act, or to any other law hereafter to be made in this kingdom, ſo far as ſuch law ſhall relate to and mention the ſaid plantations, are illegal, null and void to all intents and purpoſes whatſoever." Thus it appears that two and forty years before the grant of our charter, the juriſdiction

on of parliament over us, was openly and explicitly claimed; and again, twenty nine years before; and then in the charter itſelf, this ſupreme juriſdiction is expreſly reſerved; and four years after it is again confirmed in the moſt poſitive terms, and all governors bound by an oath to ſee it ſubmitted to. Now, when we conſider this claim, openly and repeatedly made, before, at, and immediately after, the granting and accepting of the charter, if the charter can be view'd in the light of a *compact*, is not this evidently one eſſential article of the agreement, on our part, namely, that we will acknowledge and ſubmit to the juriſdiction of parliament? It is plain we accepted the charter under this condition. How then can this, with the leaſt colour of truth, be called a *new* claim? Eſpecially, when this right of parliament, has not only been thus amply *claimed*, but has been all along *exerciſed*, in various inſtances, and without any oppoſition, denial or queſtion on our part—and this I find to be the caſe in fact—for, from the time of our charter, in every reign, acts of parliament have been continually making, impoſing duties, and for regulating the trade, manufactures and internal government and police of this and the other Colonies;—thus, duties have been impoſed and paid upon ſugar, rum, molaſſes, coffee, wines, &c. and on the other hand, bounties and premiums have been granted on various articles; the trade of hatters, and the manufacture of iron, by ſlitting mills, has been regulated and reſtrained—wool prohibited from being water-born—the poſt-office erected—the rates of coin eſtabliſhed—the cuting of pine trees prohibited—lands made liable to the payment of debts—the ſtatute of wills extended to the Colonies—the paper currency reſtrained—indented ſervants impowered to inliſt—troops raiſed here made ſubject to the articles of war—acts of aſſembly made void—and in divers other inſtances has this ſupreme right of parliament been exerciſed and acquieſced in, continually, without interruption, from the uſurpation of *Oliver Cromwell*, to the reign of *George* the third.

Trim. GOD bleſs his majeſty.

Sharp. Amen.—And yet ſuch is the infatuation, that people ſeem to be ruſhing into open rebellion, upon a ſuppoſition, that the parliament of England are ſetting up a new, and unheard of claim, in order to inſlave a whole people, for whom they have ever diſcover'd a parental fondneſs, and whoſe liberties and happineſs are moſt intimately connected and interwoven with their own.

Trim.

Trim. O tempora! O mores!

Sharp. From the foregoing view of the matter, if attended to, every unprejudiced man muſt be convinced, that an excluſive, ſupreme power of legiſlation, is ſo far from being convey'd to our aſſembly by *implication*, that on the contrary, their ſubordination to the ſupreme legiſlative authority of the Britiſh parliament, is moſt ſtrongly and clearly implied in the charter, and has been repeatedly and expreſly claimed and exerciſed by parliament, and tacitly acknowleged and quietly ſubmitted to by us, for at leaſt a hundred and twenty-four yeas laſt paſt, and conſequently whatever argument may be againſt the claim, this of its being *new*, muſt fall to the ground.

Fill. Well I do proteſt ſir, I'd given as good a mug of brandy-flip as I could make, that you had been at our houſe, laſt night, to argue with that Boſton miniſter and t'other man; for I don't believe they know one word of all this; becauſe they declared as how the parliament never thought of making laws for us before that *George Greenville* put it into their heads; and how it was right againſt our charter, and ſuch like—why if they'd known of theſe acts of parliament, you have been telling of, they couldn't have talk'd ſo.

Trim. Split me neighbour, *Fillpot*, if I believe you'll ever be hanged for witchcraft, or had any hand in the plot;—why man they know 'em all, as well as I know that my political preachments, to my ſhallow-pated cuſtomers, are all ſtuff'd with catch-penny lies, but I ſuppoſe it is a part of *their trade* as well as of *mine*—heaven forgive us all.

Grave. I muſt confeſs revd ſir, I never underſtood ſo much of this matter before, and truly if there are ſuch acts of parliament, as you have been mentioning, it alters the caſe very much h—hugh—h—hugh, in my opinion.

Bump. If there are! Oh, you may take my word for that, deacon, it's a long time ſince I read 'em, but I remember them perfectly, now Mr. *Sharp* puts me in mind of 'em.—Gentlemen your healths.

Trim. I hope, pleaſe your worſhip, the parliament won't lay a tax upon *cyder*.

Bump. Ha! ha! ha! you're a merry wag, you trim cloſe, but you ſhan't ſpoil my draught—come, here's t'ye old cock—I can take a joke.

Trim. Aye, and ſwallow it too, by jingo.

Puff. As for that matter, rev'd ſir, if ſo be, the acts of parliament be as you tell of, and our charter is ſuch a kind of

of a compact as you ſeem to ſuppoſe, why I'm free to own, that I don't ſee ſo much reaſon to complain; but then how can that be? For I m ſure Mr. ***** told the houſe, laſt ſeſſions, as how the tea act was an ent'ring wedge, contrived by Lord *North*, to enſlave all the colonies, and Col. ******* ſaid as much. What is your opinion of the tea act, ſir?

Sharp. My opinion is this. Before the late tea act was made, no tea could be ſhipped to America, unleſs the merchant firſt paid a duty of *one ſhilling* ſterling a pound; and this duty was paid *in England*, and the merchant took the riſque of it's ever reaching America. This made tea ſo dear, that the Dutch could greatly underſell the Engliſh Eaſt India company; and the American merchants, at leaſt ſome of them, found their account in purchaſing tea of the Dutch, and running it here; wherefore to enable the Engliſh to ſell as cheap as the Dutch, the parliament took off *nine pence* of the duty, and left only *three pence*; and this is not paid before the tea arrives ſafe here, but muſt be paid by the merchant before it is landed. And with the ſame view, they by another act, enabled the Eaſt India company to ſell their tea by wholeſale, at public auction, in Boſton; by this means, if we did not fooliſhly oppoſe it, inſtead of paying from a dollar to eight ſhillings a pound for tea, we might have it at two piſtareens, or half a dollar, at moſt.

Trim. This is a mighty grievance truly; who would not fight rather than be deprived of the liberty of paying treble price for what they buy?

Sharp. But the grievance complain'd of lies here. This act laying the three penny duty on tea, expreſly mentions, among other purpoſes, the *raiſing a revenue*: This, ſay we, is taking money out of our pockets without our conſent; and it is argued, that if they may do it in this trifling inſtance, they may do it in all others; and will go on till they leave us nothing. Upon which I would obſerve, in the firſt place, that it is not true, that this is taking money out of our pockets without our conſent; becauſe we are not *compell'd* to buy; and if we *will* buy, the ſmall pittance which we pay for the duty, we pay with our own *conſent*, as much as we do any money which we pay for any commodity we buy. The ſame might as well be ſaid, when we buy a quart of rum, or a dram, for when we pay for it, we pay our proportion of the duty laid by act of parliament on molaſſes: This we have done a long time, and never found out that it was a *grievance*, or

that

that we were thereby made *ſlaves*—but the conſequence is falſe and abſurd; for it can never follow, that becauſe we ſubmit to a *reaſonable* law, therefore we muſt be call'd to ſubmit to the moſt *tyrannical*, *unjuſt* and *unreaſonable* laws. And what is the danger from this law, any more than from other revenue laws to which we have ſo long ſubmitted? Thoſe laws have all along, in fact, *raiſed a revenue*; and becauſe this is mentioned in the act, can this poſſibly alter the caſe? Yes, ſay our patriots, this is claiming a right to tax us; but I deny it; for as I have clearly ſhewn, this is no other claim than has been made, exerciſed and ſubmitted to, for more than a century: It is eſſentially different from *taxing* us; for a *tax* is raiſed by *compulſion*, whether we will or no; but this is a *regulation* of *trade*, by which, though it *may* raiſe a *revenue*, and is *deſigned* for this purpoſe, yet no man can be *compell'd* to pay any part of it; and if he does, it is his own voluntary act, as much as when he chooſes to drink wine or rum, rather than cyder, or to wear Engliſh cloth, rather than homeſpun; and they are doing no ſervice to their country, who thus abſurdly place *tax acts* and *revenue laws* upon the ſame footing, and infer a right of *taxation*, from a right of *legiſlation* in other reſpects. But further, The tea act, as it is called, was made in the ſeventh year of the preſent reign; and the preamble, which I took a copy of, runs thus, "Whereas it is expedient that a *revenue* ſhould be raiſed in your Majeſty's dominions in America, for making a more certain and adequate proviſion for defraying the charge of the adminiſtration of juſtice, and the ſupport of civil government, in ſuch provinces where it ſhall be found neceſſary, and towards further defraying the expences of defending, protecting and ſecuring the ſaid dominions."——Now it is generally ſuppoſed, that this *expreſs purpoſe of raiſing a revenue*, in the Colonies, is entirely new and unprecedented; but to ſhow that this is a miſtake, I will read you a copy of the preamble to an act paſſed in the fourth year of this reign, which is thus, "Whereas it is expedient that new proviſions and regulations ſhould be eſtabliſhed for improving the *revenue* of this kingdom, and for extending and ſecuring the navigation and commerce between Great-Britain and your Majeſty's dominions in America, which by the peace have been ſo happily enlarged: And whereas it is juſt and neceſſary that a *revenue be raiſed* in your Majeſty's ſaid dominions in America, for defraying the expences of defending protecting and ſecuring the ſame," &c. and then the

act goes on to lay duties on ſugars, wines, Eaſt-India goods, &c. imported from Great-Britain &c. This act has been, and ſtill is, ſubmitted to, without the leaſt complaint. Now I ſhould be glad to know what difference there is between theſe two preambles, ſo far as reſpects the matter of *raiſing a revenue*.

Trim. Six of one, and half a dozen of t'other, that's all.

Sharp, Nay, ſo long ago ago as the year 1670. In an act made for regulating the plantation trade, one reaſon expreſly aſſign'd, is that otherwiſe "the trade of them would, in a great meaſure be diverted from England, and carried elſewhere, and his Majeſty's cuſtoms and *revenues* much *leſſened*." In ſhort, every *revenue act* is, in the nature of it, *an act* for *raiſing* a *revenue*, whether it be ſo expreſs'd or not; and it is trifling at this time of day, to ſtart an objection, which does not carry the force even of a quibble. If it be ſaid that the money raiſed by this act is miſapplied, becauſe our civil officers are paid out of it; I anſwer, this is a diſtinct matter: The monies raiſed by this, and all other revenue acts, are, and, for more than a century, have been, paid into his Majeſty's exchequer; and if, when there, inſtead of being applied towards eaſing Britiſh ſubjects in their taxes, as formerly, they are now applied for our eaſe, by paying the ſalaries of our governor, judges, &c. which, otherwiſe, we muſt pay by an internal tax on our poles and eſtates, it ſeems as if we could have no reaſon to complain of this as a grievance: However, even though the money when raiſed was never ſo groſſly *miſapplied*, it would by no means affect the legality and conſtitutional right of *raiſing* it; theſe are matters quite diſtinct and independant of each other.

Puff. But pray ſir, for if I am wrong I am willing to be ſet right, I would make bold to aſk yourſelf, whether you don't believe the parliament have made an act to tax our lands five ſhillings ſterling an acre, or that they will very ſoon make it?

Fill. Indeed ſir, I do aſſure you, the Boſton miniſter declared it had actually paſſed the houſe of commons, though the King had not ſign'd it; and, more than all that, he told how it was a deep plot to get away all our lands; for he ſaid they knew as how we would never ſubmit to it, and then it would be called high treaſon, and then General Gage was to take all our lands and cut them into lordſhips, and divide them among the new counſellors.

Trim. Slice me like a lemmon, landlord *Fillpot*, if I would not

not undertake, for one nippikin, to make you believe, *nolens volens*, that larks may be catch'd by the ſky's falling, or, by putting ſalt on their tails; or, that the Pope of Rome, or *man* of ſin, is a real painted *whore*, of the feminine gender; or, that the moon is made of green cheeſe—why,

"You make me think you are that tool,
"Which knaves do work with, call'd a fool."

Pray Mr. Sagacity, don't you believe there is an act of parliament, laying a duty of fifty pounds ſterling upon every marriage; and another fifty pounds upon every child born in lawful wedlock; and another giving fifty pounds bounty upon every murder of a baſtard child, provided always, any thing in the ſaid act to the contrary notwithſtanding, that ſuch child be not above the age of two years; tell me honeſtly my hoſt, don't you, in your conſcience firmly believe theſe quaint improbabilities.

Fill. Why you may laugh if you pleaſe, becauſe as how you've got a glib tongue; but I'm ready to take my corporal oath, that the Boſton miniſter, juſt after he'd been to prayer with my family, ſolemnly declared there was ſuch an act, actually paſt, and that he had ſeen it, and read it too, more than that; but I never ſaw it.

Puff. Well, if you havn't, I have; but howſomever, that *laſt* part, about murder, *ſtaggers* me, for all all.

Brim. And well it may, friend *Puff*; and, verily, thy underſtang muſt be firm and *ſolid*, or thou muſt needs have *ſtumbled* at the *threſhold*; for I affirm, ſhould an act be paſſed, containing only the firſt clauſe of this *baſtard act*, I ſhould be weak enough to renounce all my peaceable principles, and putting my truſt in an arm of fleſh, ſhould join in trying the ſtrength and temper of carnal weapons; but friend *Sharp* will lighten thy darkneſs, and, if poſſible, fine down the dregs of friend *Fillpot*'s underſtanding.

Trim. If he can, I'll be ſworn he's an adept at refining; and I would adviſe neighbour *Fillpot*, after that, to let ſome of his liquors undergo the ſame operation; for, as I'm a ſinner, it is like hoſt, like wines; both *cloudy*, not to ſay *muddy*.

Bump. That's the barber, *poſitivo*;—here's t' ye, honeſt *Trim*.

Fill. Why your tongue's no ſlander, *Trim*, and ſo I ſhan't reſent it; but every body knows my wine *muſt* be good, for I have myMadeira of 'ſquire ****, and my Fyal of deacon *** *****'s ſon in law there, I forget his name, and ſo it can't be

thick; and ſo there you're out for once.

Trim. That's what the learned call a *non ſequitur*; for by the ſame kind of argument you may prove your ſkull is not *thick*; for there nobody will diſpute the character of the *Maker*; and yet, I'll be cut up into fiddle-caſes, if the world don't agree that it is too *thick*,—but Mr. *Sharp*'s pipe is lighted—*Attendamus*.

Sharp. When I firſt read that pretended act of parliament for diſcouraging marriages, and making it lawful to murder poor innocent baſtard children, I ſuppoſed it was deſigned only as a witty piece of banter, without any miſchievous intention; and little did I think, notwithſtanding the general infatuation, that a ſingle man could be found weak enough to believe it was a real act of parliament; but to my aſtoniſhment, I find there are ſome, though I hope, for the honor of the country, they are but few, who, like gudgeons, have ſwallowed the bait, without perceiving the hook, though it lies ſo bare; and it ſeems in vain to attempt undeceiving ſuch, for they can have no underſtanding of their own to apply to, or at beſt, they have not the free uſe and exerciſe of it; ſo that it is like talking upon colours to a blind man, or upon ſounds, or any other ſubject, to a deaf man; there can be no abſurdity too groſs for ſuch ſimple credulous perſons to be taken in with, provided it is convey'd through the *right chanel*.

Fill. Why ſir, the Boſton miniſter told how it was exactly fitted to anſwer the wicked, corrupt deſign of the miniſtry, which was to prevent *poculation*.

Brim. Thou wouldeſt ſay *population*, I conclude, friend *Fillpot*.

Trim. Or *copulation*, for that will anſwer; and then the amendment is eaſy, he having nothing to do but to countermarch the P and the C.

Grave. Pho! pſhaw! Mr. *Trim*, I wonder at you h—hugh hem, you make me ſmile, but indeed you are naughty—fie! fie! h——m

Bump. As I am one of his Majeſty's juſtices of the peace, *Trim*, you are a good jolly companion; and the old grave coachman here, loves the ſmack of the whip; come deacon, here's t' ye, ha! ha! ha! h—a! here it goes.

Sharp. The man who forged the act we are ſpeaking of, has been guilty of ſuch an unprecedented inſult upon the wiſdom and integrity of the King and parliament, and upon the underſtandings of Americans; and it now appears to be done

with

with ſo wicked a deſign of ſtirring up the people to open rebellion, that, if he could be detected, I can hardly think of a puniſhment that could be call'd unjuſt or ſevere; for what effuſion of human blood—what extenſive and ſhocking miſeries is that man chargeable with, who, by wicked arts, involves a country in rebellion! The report, ſo induſtriouſly ſpread, of a *land tax*, is another malicious falſhood of the ſame kind, calculated and tending to produce the ſame horrid, miſchievous effects: There is not the ſlighteſt reaſon to ſuppoſe the King or any member of the houſe of lords or houſe of commons, have had the leaſt thought of laying any ſort of tax on our lands; or of laying upon us or our eſtates any internal tax of any kind whatever; but it is trump'd up here, to deceive and miſlead the ignorant country people, and betray them into ſuch acts, as muſt end in the loſs of life and eſtate.

Puff. Why do you really believe all this, ſir.

Sharp. As firmly as I believe that I muſt hereafter give an account of all my words and actions, to that all-ſeeing judge, who knows my heart, and cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked.

Grav. I am dreadfully afraid we have been deceived; but who could have thought mankind could be ſo wicked.

Brim. Why verily, friend *Gravelrs*, had'ſt thou but made uſe of thine own underſtanding, inſtead of blindly following thoſe filthy ſons of belial, whoſe very exiſtence depends upon the confuſion of their country, thou wouldeſt not now marvel at what friend *Sharp* has been conveying to thy mind.

Puff. But pray, revd ſir, we have ſome grievances, certainly, why there's the governor's and judges ſalaries—and then there's the alteration of our council and juries—pray ſir a'nt this taking away our charter?

Sharp. That the new method of appointing the council, is an alteration of that part of our charter is true, and that the new regulation reſpecting jurors is different from that preſcribed by our province law is alſo true, but that theſe are *grievances*, may well be queſtioned.—The Engliſh conſtitution has ever been thought by the wiſeſt men of all nations, the beſt form of government in the whole world—and if ſo, theſe two alterations in our conſtitution are ſo far from being *grievous*, that they are *beneſits*, becauſe they bring us nearer to *perfection*—for our jurors are now to be choſen in the ſame manner they are in England; and our council being now made independent of the governor and people, and removeable only

by

by the king, as the governor is, brings them to a much nearer reſemblance to the houſe of lords; and beſides, both council and juries are now upon exactly the ſame footing as they are in New-Hampſhire, New-York and all the ſouthern governments, and in all the Weſt-India Iſlands, ſo that if this makes us *ſlaves*, all thoſe other governments, as well as England, are, and ever have been, ſlaves—and the ſame may be obſerved of the king's paying his governor and judges, for the caſe is juſt the ſame in all king's governments; and in England likewiſe, ſo far as reſpects the judges—and if we look back to former times, and conſider how our council was ſituated.

Trim. Like a turnip between two trenchers.

Sharp. Liable, annually to be diſplac'd, either by the *governor* or the *houſe*, if they offended either, and how miſerably our judges have been paid, and how dependent they alſo were upon both the governor and the houſe, we muſt ſee the wiſdom of both theſe alterations; and when we are cool, I doubt not, we ſhall highly approve of, and rejoice in them: And as to juries, the ſame privilege of being *tried* by our *countrymen*, is left to us—and the method of chooſing them them is ſuch as long experience has proved to be the beſt; and not attended with any dangerous conſequences.

Puff. Well, don't you think ſir, theſe things were brought about by enemies to the country, among ourſelves?

Sharp. No, it is our own imprudent conduct, has ſhewn the king and parliament the neceſſity of theſe alterations, and they have done it for our good.

Puff. Why there's the Quebec-bill; don't you think they intend to bring in Popery? For the Boſton miniſter ſaid as how they did; and that every man that wouldn't turn Papiſt, was to loſe his land.

Sharp. That Boſton miniſter, as well as ſome others, I'm ſorry to ſay it, has much to anſwer for—he knows better—the Quebec-bill can no more affect our civil or religious liberties, than the laws of Holland can,—what parliament has done is no more than they were bound to do, by every rule of equity and common juſtice: The Canadians ſurrendered their country to his Britannic Majeſty upon expreſs condition, among others, that they ſhould enjoy the free exerciſe of their religion; and to this end, that they ſhould have a Roman-catholic biſhop, to be approved of by the king of England—this was one article of the capitulation, expreſly agreed to by the general to whom they ſurrendered—this engagement

is now confirm'd by parliament, and this is all—now it is plain, they are entitled to the enjoyment of their religion, according to the full extent and meaning of this agreement, or their country ought to be reſtored to them—and if the Engliſh government intended to comply with their terms of capitulation, ought they not to give them the fulleſt aſſurance of it, by confirming them by an act? Surely, if parliament is to be blamed for any thing, it ſhould ſeem to be rather, that they have not quieted the minds of the Canadians by giving them this aſſurance before—for we muſt remember that their religion is as dear to them, as ours is to us, and they have the ſame right to worſhip God, in the way they think right, that we claim for ourſelves—they have prejudices of education to biaſs them, as we have; and they have their own natural underſtandings, and their prieſts to guide them as we have; and they have an equal right with us to the benefit of the goſpel rule, "Do to others as ye would they ſhould do unto you". And we ſhould do well to remember that, "with what meaſure we mete, it ſhall be meaſured unto us again.—In ſhort, the only principles upon which parliament can be arrainged in this inſtance, are entirely deſtructive of all liberty of conſcience; and in point of common juſtice, and the faith of nations, they can be found fault with, only upon the malevolent, unjuſt, diabolical poſition, which, God forbid Proteſtants ſhould ever adopt, that no faith is ever to be kept with hereticks.—As to the danger ariſing to our religion, from this act, it is a mere bugbear, raiſed to diſturb weak minds; for nothing can be more egregiouſly abſurd than to infer, that becauſe the king and parliament from the plain dictates of juſtice and humanity have comply'd with their moſt ſolemn treaty made by their general, and upon the faith of which, an extenſive country has been ſurrendered to them, that therefore the king intends to violate his coronation oath, and break thro' the condition upon which he holds his crown; and that the lords and commons, collected from all parts of England, are joining in this impolitic, inquitous, fooliſh deſign.—Let us turn the tables, and make the preſent caſe of the Canadians, our own.—Suppoſe the king of France had conquer'd New-England, at the time the king of England conquer'd Canada; and we had capitulated upon condition, that we ſhould enjoy our own religion, and chooſe our own miniſters, as we had done from the firſt ſettlement of the country to this time; and the French general had agreed to this, as general Amherſt did to their terms;

and

and we had remained ever since under the French government; and when the king of France and his parliament had confirmed this treaty by a law; and the province of Canada should make a clamour, and say the king of France, being governed by his mistresses, intended to introduce the Protestant religion among them: I ask every unprejudiced man, whether he would not think, and say, the Canadians were the most jealous, unreasonable and unjust people under heaven?—I will venture to answer, yes, for every Englishman upon the continent—and are our clamours less unreasonable than theirs would be under similar circumstances? Certainly with what judgment we should judge them, we ought to be judged—but further, whence arises the mighty danger? The act of parliament grants no new liberty; it only confirms what they have enjoy'd for eleven or twelve years, since the conquest, and for a century before; and has Popery spread or prevail'd in any degree in the other Colonies, during that time—or has our religion suffered from the prevalency of that of the Roman catholics in *Virginia*, for many years past—surely people must feel but little of the power and influence of their religion, who fear any danger arising to it, from the bare *toleration* of any *other religion* in any *other part* of the globe. In short, it is plain, beyond a possibility of doubt, that this innocent and just act of parliament is greedily catch'd at, by your deceivers, as a lucky prop to a cause which has no foundation, but in delusion; and consequently, is in danger of falling every moment—they have persuaded you that the two grand objects for which men in society, will fight, if they ever fight, are now at stake, viz. *religion* and *property*.

Trim. Aye, *pro aris et focis*—that's now the watch-ward, not that I believe they'll *fight* for them, without better proof of their being in *danger*.—Our people *talk* too much to *fight*, your true fighting fellows are always pretty silent—they talk little, and pay it off in thinking.

Bump. I'll forfeit my commission if there's any fighting, till there's better cause for it—fighting forsooth! Why what should they fight for? Do they feel any grievance yet? Are any taxes demanded of them? Does any body meddle with their lands? Are the pulpits shut up? Are their bibles taken from them? Are they restrained of their liberty to go and come, and do as they please? Are their wives ravish'd or their daughters?

Trim. Ha! ha! ha!——Whiz.

Bump.

Bump. What do they feel? What do they ſee? What do they hear, but idle tales? Don't they ſay, and do as they pleaſe? And isn't this a proof of the mildneſs of the government? Talk of liberty—why, in the name of wonder, what is liberty if this isn't? They ſay and do as they will, and get what they can, and keep what they get, and go to church, or ſtay at home, as they liſt; they ſwear and drink, and lie and whore and cheat, and rob, and pull down houſes, and tar and feather, and play the devil in every ſhape, juſt as the devil and their own inclinations lead them; and yet they cry out for liberty; what the deuce would they have, or what would they be at? Why too much liberty has made them ſo raving mad, that they can't diſtinguiſh liberty from ſlavery; fighting! I ſay fighting—a fiddle-ſtick's end—theſe are not your fellows for fighting; they'll run upon the firſt fire, if they wait for that.

Sharp. Indeed, they don't well conſider what they talk of, when they talk of fighting the King's troops; they don't ſit down firſt and count the coſts; they don't conſider that they are entering the liſts with a power, which is more than a match for all the other powers of Europe; they don't conſider the horrors of a civil war; the terrible attendants even on a ſucceſsful rebellion; much leſs, the fatal conſequences of an unſucceſsful, forceable oppoſition to their lawful ſovereign and his lawful authority. England is a powerful ſtate by ſea, ſuperior to all the reſt of the world combined; ſhe can block up all our harbours, and prevent all foreign imports, and cut off all communications between the Colonies by ſea; by this means we may at once be cut off from all ſupplies of cloathing, grain, *rum*, ſugar, molaſſes, *ſalt*, ammunition, fiſh, and every article of foreign trade, either for our own neceſſary conſumption or for re exportation; the ſhipping of the province may all be made lawful prize, and every ſea port town be laid in ruins.—By land, with a very few regiments, ſhe may cut off all intercourſe between town and town, and go on to lay waſte and utterly deſtroy our houſes, barns, fields, cattle, grain and ſtock of all kinds, until a body can aſſemble who ſhall dare to face them in the field. And here ariſes to our view innumerable difficulties not yet attended to: Our wives and children muſt be ſecured; our eſtates deſerted; proviſions, arms, ammunition, camp-equipage and other neceſſaries of war muſt be provided; leaders ſkill'd in the art of war muſt be found; and if we think we have any ſuch among us, what a vaſt proportion of them will, before the criſis comes on, declare for the loyal ſide; and what numbers, muſt we be ſure,

will follow them when we reflect, that this is a country of *property* and consider what will be the certain consequences of a defeat: For the punishment of open traitors and rebels is not, and cannot be, governed by any certain rules of law, but is inflicted summarily, according to the exigence of the times; and what these consequences must be, it is shocking to humanity to consider: Suppose a battle, and numbers slain and the rest put to flight; what multitudes must be sacrificed in the subsequent pursuit; what numbers taken prisoners, impaled and gibbetted from unavoidable necessity; and what then becomes of their wives and helpless innocent children; and of the aged and infirm; for then it will be impossible to make those distinctions which humanity would wish for, but one general calamity must involve the innocent, if such there are, with the guilty—but suppose by a lucky accident, a body of the King's forces, should be worsted, how long would it be before they would appear again with an irresistable force, and with a resentment that would mark the whole country with desolation and misery; imagine to yourselves, an individual head of a family, mortually wounded in battle, but lingering in the pangs of death—what would be his bitter reflections, and how would he condemn his own rashness and folly in that awful interval; in some such plaintive moans as these, may we well suppose, he would breathe out his life—"What have I done, foolish man that I was—why did I blindly rush upon certain ruin—now that my passions are cooled, and reason, alas! too late, has resumed her seat, all those imaginary grievances disappear—I now die a traitor and rebel by the laws of my country—my estate is forfeited—my affectionate wife and our innocent babes, the sweet pledges of our loves—how have I, who ought to have been their guide and protector—how have I left them friendless, forlorn, destitute of the means of procuring daily bread—to what hardships, dangers and distresses have I abandoned them—O my God, how shall I look up in this hour of torture—take them, O take them under thy protection—for they are innocent of the heavy crime that now weighs down the soul of their unhappy husband and father."

Trim. I wonder what makes my eyes water so—I believe it grows late.

Brim. Verily friend *Trim*, thy humanity is more pleasing than even thy sprightly humour—thou needst not be ashamed of thy weakness in this case—that silent tear, drop'd over the picture of thy distress'd country, does thee an honor which kings might envy, but could not confer. *Sharp.*

Sharp. Such are the miſeries to which this poor, unhapily deluded people are haſtening apace; and all to ſave thoſe liberties, which their own fooliſh credulity, and the wicked arts of their deſigning leaders, have miſrepreſented to their heated imaginations as being in danger; and which, heaven knows, how ſoon they may loſe in good earneſt, if they go on in their mad career; well is it ſaid, that, rebellion is like the ſin of witchcraft, for in both caſes, the minds of men are entirely actuated by ſuch a ſpirit, as renders them proper *demoniacs*; otherwiſe it would be morally impoſſible, that they ſhould throw up lives and fortunes, merely becauſe they fear they are in danger of loſing a few of thoſe rights, which no people under heaven either do or wiſh to enjoy—and without which, I may add, we ſhould have been much happier, had we never fancied ourſelves entitled to them.

Puff. But, with ſubmiſſion revd ſir, has not the grand continental congreſs, in their wiſdom, adopted the Suffolk reſolves, and called upon us *to extend our view to the moſt unhappy events, and be* IN ALL RESPECTS *prepared for every contingency?* And what is this but preparing for civil war?

Sharp. They have advided to this and many other extraordinary ſteps; but that they have done it in their *wiſdom*, is, I confeſs, more than I can ſee.

Trim. We read of a kind of *wiſdom* which is *fooliſhneſs*; and if the meaſures of our *auguſt congreſs* can be ſaid to be *wiſe*, I believe it muſt be in ſome ſuch *figurative* ſenſe.

Sharp. I never was ſo painfully deceived in my expectations, in any inſtance, as I have been in this of the conduct of the congreſs; I comforted myſelf with the moſt ſanguine hopes, that they would adopt ſuch prudent meaſures, as might tend to bring about an accommodation of all our unhappy diſputes: but inſtead of this, they have blown up a ſpark, which was but kindling, into a raging conflagration. Their *reſolves* are nothing ſhort of *high treaſon*; their *aſſociation* is an open declaration of *hoſtilities*, partaking ſo equally of *wickedneſs* and *folly*, that it is hard to ſay which is it's prevailing characteriſtic; it recommends robbery to the whole continent; it is calculated to reduce thouſands of families to poverty and ruin; it tends directly to quarreling, fightings and murders; it is a ſcheme, in the fixed nature of things, impoſſible to be executed; it muſt render us contemptible in the eyes of Britons, a reproach, a laughing-ſtock and a bye-word, among all civilized nations. Their addreſſes are a jargon of contradictions and abſurdities; *Britons* and *Canadians* muſt ſmile with inexhauſtible

contempt, at so gross an imposition upon their understandings. In short, every step they have taken has been just the reverse of what it ought to have been, and in my opinion, they have remov'd us infinitely further from peace and happiness, than we should have been, had a congress never been thought on.

Brim. To my understanding, it appears in a clear light that all our public measures in congresses, town meetings, body-meetings, and delegate-meetings, have tended, instead of mending matters, to make bad, worse; they have all partook of one and the same evil spirit; government, without which mankind cannot live in society, has been overturned and trampled on—magistrates insulted, abused and driven from their habitations—the courts of justice violently shut up—individuals persecuted and buffetted and their property destroyed, merely for exercising the right of private judgment—high treason and rebellion stalk through the land at noon day—and civil war is openly talked of, with a blind, enthusiastic zeal, equal to that which in former days, crowded friend *Whitefield*'s lectures. But if such measures procure a redress of grievances, as the cant phrase is, it must be, because the nature of things is changed, and the same causes produce effects contrary to those they have ever before produced.

Bump. Fiddle faddle, 'tis all stuff and nonsense; *redress of grievances* is but the decoy set up to catch the ignorant and unwary. The leaders aim at an independency on Great-Britain, in order to become themselves the tyrants of the Colonies. And, if God in judgment for our ingratitude and folly, should give us up to our own heart's desire, we should soon see *high and mighty states*, like those of Holland, or swarms of *petty princes* like those of Germany, whose little fingers would be thicker than the loins of King, lords and commons; who would trample on the liberties, and tread on the necks of this infatuated people; would chastize them with scorpions, and their portion would be, the curse of Ham, to become the servant of servants; a long scene of war and bloodshed would despoil and depopulate this fertile, happy country, till some more fortunate villain, would rise superior to his comrades, and become alone the lordly tyrant over this now free people. It is enough to make a wise man mad to see how tamely the common people suffer themselves to be fooled, first out of their *senses*, and then out of their *liberty, property*, and *lives*. Let a *mountebank*, who has fled from justice for *blasphemy, treason* and *rebellion* in another province, set himself up here for a *patriot*, forsooth, and they will stand gaping like idiots, and let

him

him take all their teeth out of their heads. Tell them thro' the channel of a ſeditious news-paper, the moſt improbable tale about grievances, and they believe it more firmly than they will thoſe many parts of holy writ which enjoin ſubmiſſion to rulers, as a chriſtian duty. Let one of their demagogues but hint that ſome hundreds of perſons of the greateſt property in the province—who were born here—whoſe families are here—whoſe eſtates are here—whoſe characters in public and private life, they have long known, proved and adored, are all at once become enemies to their country, to their friends, to their neighbours, to their families, to themſelves and to GOD, and they inſtantly fall upon them with a ſavage barbarity, which the uncivilized unchriſtianized Indians never exerciſed towards the invaders of their peaceful tenants. Tell them, the parliament of Great Britain may be made to tremble at the threats of an American congreſs, and they believe it; tell them the veteran troops of that potent kingdom will fly before an undiſciplined multitude of New-England ſquirrel-hunters, and they will ſwallow it without a hiccough; and each hero in his chimney corner, kills his dozen, and crows victorious; tell them all communication is cut off between Boſton and the country, and down it goes, though they go there every day to market and return without moleſtation; tell them, though our trade and our ſea-port towns ſhould be all deſtroyed, it would do us no hurt; that if they beat their ploughſhares into ſwords, and their crow-bars into gun-barrels, and go all to training, nevertheleſs their lands without tilling, will produce ſufficient for themſelves and all the inhabitants of the ſea-port towns, and they believe it moſt ſeriouſly: tell them a duty of a *three pence* upon tea is more a grievance than a duty of a *ſhilling*, and they believe it; tell them what would be high treaſon in *England*, is no crime at all in *America*, and on they go, blindfold, to the open commiſſion of it, with the ſame devotion that they go to meeting to hear the ſame comfortable doctrine preached:—In ſhort there is no abſurdity too great for their ſwallows, or too hard for their ſtomachs, if it does but come from the right books, and through the proper channel. And as they believe, ſo they practice: How filly has been their behaviour all over the province: two thouſand aſſembled at Great Barrington—as many more at Springfield: three thouſand at Worceſter, and four thouſand at Cambridge: beſides other formidable bodies Eaſtward and Southward: all with halters about their necks: and for what? Why truly, to prevent four unarmed judges from holding a provincial, conſtitutional, chartered court

of

of juſtice; and to compel one, two, or at moſt three counſellors, appointed by the King, to reſign their ſeats at the board, which ſeats they either had never accepted, or if they had, their reſignations were void and of no effect.—Other bodies of miſcreants have aſſembled, in warlike array, for the heroic purpoſe of compelling an aged, infirm juſtice, who had ſign'd an addreſs, to *recant*, that is, to ſet his name to an infamous lie fabricated, in general, if they have been truly retailed in the news-papers, by heroes in their *cups*, incapable of ſpelling or reaſoning. And in thoſe inſtances where the devoted victims, have either ſecreted themſelves, or had reſolution enough to appear and refuſe, like Shadrach, Meſhech and Abednego, to fall down and worſhip the *brazen* image, ſome have been deny'd the common rights of humanity; ſuch as having corn ground for the daily bread of themſelves and families; others the common privileges and conveniences of ſociety, ſuch as employing laborers for hire, to reap, mow, threſh, &c. nay the very dumb beaſts of ſome, have been deny'd the common rights of nature; an inſtance of this kind happened in the county of Middleſex, where an unfortunate addreſſer having a cow, ſent her over to his neighbour, a deacon, who was the owner of a bull, and to whom he had, for ſome years, ſent all his cows in the like exigencies; but the pious deacon, animated with a holy zeal againſt Lord *North* and Gov. *Hutchinſon*, warmed with the ſtreams of *modern patriotiſm*, and free from the infirmity of *univerſal benevolence*, ſwore *his* bull ſhould not bull a *tory* cow.

Trim. I fancy the deacon was well ſtricken in years.

Bump. In all parts of the province, we have ſeen inſtances of this egregious folly of the mob, in compelling addreſſers to Gov. *Hutchinſon*, and to his preſent Excellency Gen. *Gage*, to recant; juſt as if ſuch forced recantations could perſuade the world that ſuch addreſſers did *not* addreſs! The actors in theſe tragi-comi farcical ſcenes have no meaning at all; in them it is all the effect of rum and flip: Their abettors mean to make adminiſtration believe that we are all of one mind; but their folly is glaring; a band of highway robbers might as well make the world believe that they and the perſons rob'd are all of a mind, by obliging them, when in their power, to ſign a confeſſion that they conſented to the robbery. People have been gulled, impoſed on, and miſled long enough; it is high time for them to look about them; the night is far ſpent, the day is at hand—the day of reckoning—the day, when the friends and foes, the leige ſubjects, and the rebels and traitors,

to George the third, muſt be diſtinguiſhed: And however ſpecioufly the leaders may flatter their blind followers with hopes of ſucceſs in their oppoſition, by publiſhing *extracts of letters from England*, they may aſſure themſelves there is not the leaſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that parliament will not ſupport their authority, even to the ruin of the preſent generation, in this and all the other Colonies, if it can't be eſtabliſhed at a leſs expence. And it is as certain that *ſubmiſſion* is required only to ſave the *honor* of government; they never intend to tax us; they don't wiſh to enſlave us; they abhor the thought; they want us to be happy and free; but no, we forſooth, muſt quarrel for a *ſhadow*, under a moral certainty of loſing the *ſubſtance* in the conteſt. The people are told by their oracles, that, if they give way now, their chains are riveted, and ſuch kind of trumpery; but, if they would but open their eyes, they might ſee that this is mere delufion; let them try the experiment of ſubmitting; and if all their grievances are not redreſs'd, they may as well take up the cudgels, one or two, or ten years hence, as now. They will have hands and guns *then* as well as *now*; and the deuce is in it, if they don't think their wives, their children, their eſtates and their necks, worth *trying* to ſave. Some tell them they have been *guilty of treaſon already*, they have *put their hands to the plough*, and it's too late, to look back. This is the language of vile ſeducers; but it is never too late in this world, to repent; and the ſooner the better; they have a gracious King to deal with and a parliament of Britons, who know the value of civil and religious liberty, and can make all due allowances for the ſudden extravagancies of Engliſhmen, when firſt impreſſed with the fear of loſing it; but it muſt be remembered, that the obſtinate perſeverance of incorrigible offenders, will put a period to the long ſuffering even of the Deity. I think I can perceive, that the eyes of many begin to open; I heartily wiſh they may attain a full view of their danger, before the door of mercy is ſhut. But I aſk pardon, revd ſir, for breaking in upon your diſcourſe, and interrupting it ſo long; the diſtreſſes coming upon my country, through the wicked machinations of mock patriots lie uppermoſt in my mind; and when I enter upon the ſubject, I know not where to ſtop. But I have done.—

Sharp. Indeed ſquire, there needs no apology; you have deliver'd my ſentiments, in much better terms than I can pretend to. The ſubject as you obſerve, is of the greateſt moment; and happy will it be, if you, by your converſation, and

I by my preaching, can awaken our neighbours and friends to ſerious conſideration, before it be too late.

Trim. Well, I'm determin'd to drop my ſhop preachments, or elſe, for the future, to take the right ſide of the queſtion, and diſcharge my conſcience, whatever becomes of my cuſtom.

Grave. I verily fear we are all wrong, and the ſooner we turn about, the better for the country.

Puff. I profeſs, I'm of the ſame mind; I begin to ſee things in a different light from what I did: Indeed I never liked the high proceedings of the provincial congreſs; this affair of ſeizing the King's monies, and taking the militia out of the hands of the governor, I could never ſee through; it is againſt the King's prerogative, and ſounds too much like treaſon; and I'm reſolved not to go to the next, if I am choſen.

Fill. I deſire to be thankful I've had nothing to do with theſe matters, and don't intend to; I'll mind my own buſineſs and that's enough for me.

Trim. Bravo, neighbour *Filpot*—ſtick to that, and you'll do well enough—I'll be ſworn your buſineſs will never fail, till all the ports upon the continent are blocked up. And as to you, neighbour *Puff*, you have made the wiſeſt ſpeech, and the beſt reſolution you ever made in your life; ſtand by it, and you may ſave your bacon yet. I hope my paſt offences will be forgiven, in conſideration of the ſtrength of the temptation; and I'll give them leave to tuck me up, without ceremony, if ever I preach up treaſon and rebellion again, ſo long as my name's *Trim*.

Brim. Ah! Friend *Trim*, if all that have preached treaſon and rebellion, were to be tuck'd up, as thou phraſeſt it, the harveſt truly would be plenteous, and the laborers few.

Trim. Hemp would bear a good price, I believe.

Brim. Treaſon is an odious crime in the ſight of God and men; may we none of us liſten to the ſuggeſtions of ſatan, but may the candle of the Lord within, lighten our paths; and may the ſpirit lead us in the way of truth, and preſerve us from all ſedition, privy conſpiracy and rebellion. But it grows late, and the ſpirit moveth me to be getting home. Friend *Sharp*, fare thee well. Come friends.

Sharp. Gentlemen I wiſh you all a very good night.—

Exeunt omnes.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM